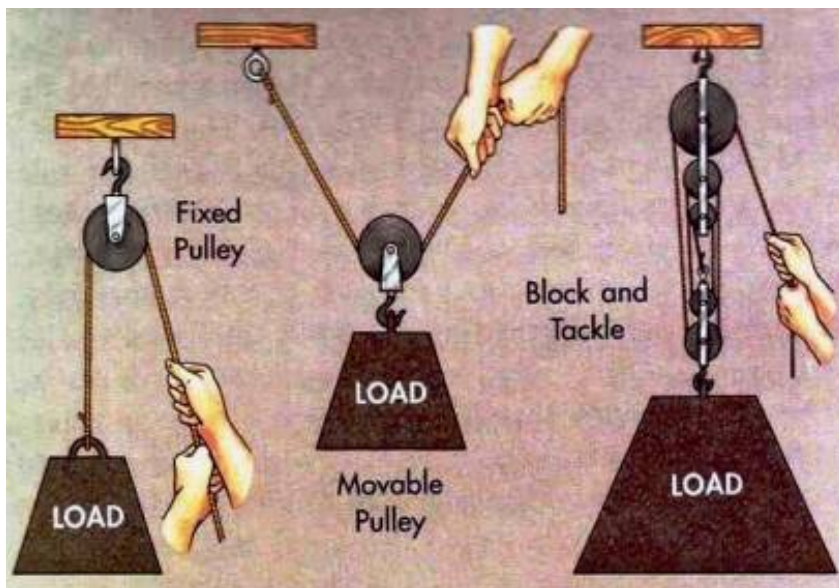


PULLEY BLOCK

The Pulley Block is a simple machine consisting essentially of a wheel with a grooved rim in which a pulled rope or chain can run to change the direction of the pull and thereby lift a heavy load. Two or more pulleys together are called a block and tackle.

A famous Greek mathematician named Archimedes most likely came up with the earliest prototype of the pulley block. He investigated properties of the lever and pulley. It is on the basis of these that he is said to have asserted, "Give me a place to stand and I can move the earth." King Hieron once asked for a demonstration to prove what Archimedes knew all along. In the harbor was a new ship which the combined strength of a team of Greek men could not launch. Archimedes used a mechanical device that enabled him, standing some distance away, to move the ship. The device he used was a simple compound pulley.

Years later, this mechanical device was used in many more ways than just launching ships. The Greeks used the pulley block to lift enormous forty-foot columns and move massive blocks of marble into place. Any heavy object that a team of the strongest Greek men could not lift or move, now could be lifted with ease. Think of all the things that surround us everyday that uses the pulley block. It tough to imagine life without this simple machine!



Source: Adapted from the Summit County Educational Resource Center.